

with current happenings. I realized some time ago what it was to be away from the touch of the world-wide information which the newspapers afford. For two weeks I did not see a railroad train; my journey began on February 14th, and while I traveled peacefully and ignorantly through the country, beyond the sound of the railroad trains, and beyond the reach of the printing press, in Havana harbor the mine was fired which destroyed our battleship Maine, and which precipitated the most gigantic development of American civilization, if not of world-wide civilization, history will record. But to me, it was as if it had never happened. My heart did not thrill with patriotic ardor, my soul did not burn with patriotic indignation, for I was ignorant of it all. Two weeks later, I picked up a copy, at the first opportunity, of a newspaper, and then I felt what thousands and millions had felt two weeks before. Do you know that this illustrates the condition of five hundred thousand of our people, yea, even more than that! For there are thousands who, having eyes, see not, and who, being able to read, read not—a condition closely approximating illiteracy itself. And this condition of things must most vitally affect the industrial productiveness of the State. An ignorant people have never in all the world's history been a prosperous people. Ignorance never was, and never will be, a good farmer. Success and prosperity are in knowing how. 'No richness of climate, no spontaneous productiveness of soil, no facilities of commerce, no stores of gold or diamonds, garnered in the treasure chambers of the earth can cover even worldly prosperity upon an uneducated State.' The State of Massachusetts is the most striking example of the effect of popular education upon industrial progress. Each child in Massachusetts has an average of seven years of two hundred days each of education. The average in North Carolina is only seventy-two days, instead of two hundred. That is, Massachusetts has about five times as much education for her children as North Carolina for hers. In physical condition, Massachusetts is really inferior to North Carolina. She has no navigable river; she has no mountains as has North Carolina, to tempt and satisfy the dreams and fortune of a Monte Cristo. She has no gold nor gems in her soil. 'Her best mineral is granite, and ice is the only pearl to be found in her waters.' And yet, Massachusetts heads the list of great American States. As when Webster spoke, there she stands; behold her! She needs no encomium. She stands there as the greatest American illustration of the relationship which exists between public education as the cause and industrial wealth as the result. There she stands with her assessed and taxable wealth of nearly three billion dollars, over one-half the total assessed valuation of the thirteen Southern States: